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A CATHOLIC PRESIDENT
— John Cogley

THE

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Efforts Toward Reunion

The Church Universal

by Bede Griffiths

Case for Discontent

by John C. Cort

A Wash of Gamboge

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THE
Commonweal
A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

week by week

CATHOLICS AND THE PRESIDENCY

THIS EDITORIAL is being written in a week which produced a rash of articles on the candidacy of a Catholic for the Presidency. Discussing the question elsewhere in this issue, John Cogley stresses the nature of the Catholic conscience and the Constitutional limitations imposed upon any President. Here we will concern ourselves only with that aspect of the matter raised by *Newsweek* in its issue for December 21—how Catholics themselves feel about the question.

"Do Catholics really want a Catholic President?" *Newsweek* asked. If its survey is correct, the average Catholic voter—"insofar as such a composite figure exists"—has rather mixed feelings. He would like to see a Catholic run and win, mainly to wipe out the notion that no Catholic can be elected President. But he would not, he says, vote for a Catholic unless convinced he was the man best qualified for the Presidency. And although he knows it is impossible, the average Catholic voter wishes that the religious issue could be kept out of the campaign.

The Catholic voter, according to *Newsweek,* believes there is far less anti-Catholicism today than in 1928, but he is still frankly worried about the bitterness the campaign may produce, a bitterness that he feels is foreshadowed by the birth control controversy. Sometimes the Catholic wonders if the entire issue should not be avoided for a few more years, but on balance he would prefer to face the issue right now, even though he fears that any mistakes made by a Catholic President would be blamed on his religion or "on the Pope." And, finally, the Catholic voter sees absolutely no conflict between a President's being a loyal American and a good Catholic.

So went *Newsweek's* summary of the thinking of the average Catholic on this issue. Nothing in the results, we should add, contradicts our own impressions of Catholic feeling in this matter. Two points seem to us particularly significant.

WE THINK it is indeed a fact, first of all, that the average Catholic sees no conflict between his Catholicism and his loyalty to the United States. Non-Catholics may talk about Franco's Spain, or cite the Church-State views said to be held by Italy's Cardinal Ottaviani, or refer to Pius IX's *Syllabus of Errors* (usually inaccurately), but the average Catholic remains untroubled. Catholics in this country have always upheld the Constitution and defended the Republic, he seems to reason, and he has no doubt at all that they will continue to do so. In this sense, then, much of the current discussion of the candidacy of a Catholic for President seems to him as nothing more than anti-Catholicism, plain and simple.

The second striking point in the *Newsweek* responses is the absence of reference by Catholics to any "organizational" advantages for the Church in the election of a Catholic. Although many non-Catholics express concern that a Catholic President might use his power on behalf of what are thought of as "Catholic interests," this is an aspect of the matter that the Catholic voter seems not to consider. It might well be argued that "Catholic interests" would actually be hurt by the election of a Catholic President; as President a Catholic might feel impelled to lean so far backward to show his fairness that he would be less free than a non-Catholic—less free, for example, than Baptist Harry Truman when he suggested the appointment of a Vatican Ambassador. But these questions of "organizational" interests do not seem to be of any great concern to the average Catholic voter.

Why should this be so? Why is the average

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Catholic uninterested in this aspect of the question? We suggest it is because he is not looking for a preferred position or special favors for his Church. For him there is no conflict in supporting enthusiastically the traditional American belief in the equality of all religions before the law and at the same time continuing to believe that the Catholic Church is the Church established by Christ. Here is a central fact which cannot be repeated too often: American Catholics wholeheartedly support the Constitution, including the First Amendment; the fact that Catholics may disagree with currently prevalent interpretations of the First Amendment on questions like health services or bus rides for parochial school children should not be allowed to obscure this fact.

The election of a Catholic as President, then, is seen by Catholic voters not as a "practical" issue involving the fortunes of the Church but as a symbolic matter. For them the debate raises the old question: must a Catholic or a Jew continue to be regarded as in some respects a second-class citizen? For millions of Catholics the issue is that clear. And it is precisely because this is so, because the issue is symbolic rather than practical, that the whole debate is so explosive in character.

The most explicit statement on this aspect of the issue that we have seen recently was written in the N. Y. *Post* by William Shannon, who will be remembered by many readers for his occasional contributions to this magazine. Wrote Mr. Shannon:

"The question of Church-and-State theory . . . is a valid and interesting intellectual issue, but it is principally of concern to churchmen and philosophers. . . . What is the real issue? Why is there any concern about having a Catholic in the White House? . . . The election of a Catholic President symbolizes to millions of Protestants the passing of power to a minority. That is the real issue involved in the election of a Catholic. It would be true whether his name was Alfred Smith or John Kennedy or Eugene McCarthy. It would be true whatever position he took on Church and state. . . . Would power in any substantive sense be shifted, it might be asked, by the change from a Protestant to a Catholic President? The answer, of course, is that it would not. . . . There would be, however, a shift taking place in an intangible area, but one important to many people. . . . As long as we have a Protestant in the White House, people can feel that this is in some vague sense a Protestant country . . . is it not time we stopped masking cultural fears and fancies with religious arguments and Church-State theorizing?"

Although the editors of this magazine have consistently said that the Church-State issue is one which must be discussed, we think Mr. Shannon's point should be carefully considered. For Protestants the nomination of a Catholic means facing the idea that ours is a pluralistic society with a strong Protestant tradition rather than a Protestant society with a pluralist tradition. This is not easy, especially for those who have been conditioned to think of the Church of Rome as the Scarlet Woman. On the Catholic side too the issue is a highly emotional one. The American hierarchy and many priests may be indifferent on the subject, but to average Catholics the election of a Catholic President would mean a great deal; they would see it, we think, as the final step to full citizenship for Catholics and a vindication of the American ideal they wholeheartedly endorse.

Under these circumstances, restraint is called for from commentators on both sides. For better or for worse, religion is now inextricably a part of the 1960 campaign, and it is not our purpose to suggest that any real issues in connection with it be avoided. We do urge, however, that nothing be said that will only serve to set one group of Americans against another unnecessarily. Whatever the outcome of the 1960 elections, we must all live together after they are over. Every American, therefore, should think twice before saying or doing anything that would only encourage bitter religious animosities at a time when the nation can ill afford them.

INDEPENDENCE IN AFRICA

IN THE general rush for independence in Africa the differences in the policies of the various European colonial powers seem to be of little account. The possible exception is Portugal, which may be able to hold onto Angola and Mozambique for a while longer, since native development in those two large colonies has been kept in such check. Otherwise variations in emphasis appear to have made little difference in the present urge for independence.

In the Belgian Congo, for example, where much has been done in the way of education and the building up of the native economy, the people cannot seem to get rid of their European overlords fast enough. Nationalists in Leopoldville shunned local elections designed to lead in a few months to the establishment of a national legislature. Native outbursts have been increasing in violence and

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frequency, while King Baudouin's arrival there on a mission of good will and pacification has been greeted by native disturbances of the most violent character.

Britain, which has gone the furthest in encouraging political autonomy, continues on this course, with Tanganyika, Kenya and possibly Rhodesia and Nyasaland, scheduled soon for major constitutional changes. France may be hanging on desperately in Algeria, but such African colonies as Senegal and the Sudan Republic and the Ivory Coast Republic and Madagascar should soon be negotiating on their independence. It seems to be an irresistible tide.

The new nations of Africa, where Secretary General Hammarskjold is on a five-week mission, will greatly change the balance of power in the United Nations itself. When some eighteen more will have brought U.N. membership to a total of one hundred, some three or fours years hence, a combination of the anti-colonial members and the Soviet bloc will easily be able to muster the two-thirds majority required for the adoption of resolutions by the General Assembly. The newly independent Asian-African members already comprise a formidable voting aggregate, which becomes more powerful with each U.N. session. The dimensions of the prospect therefore become increasingly clear.

American efforts to restrict further U.N. membership by setting up new qualifications this late in the day would only play into Soviet hands. The hope is that anti-colonialism as a new nation's only decisive motivation will give way in time to more positive and more general concerns at the United Nations. This has already been demonstrated on occasion by several newly-independent Asiatic nations. Hence the future of the U.N. as an instrument of world peace and international cooperation will almost inevitably depend to a large extent on the attitudes of the Afro-Asian membership. Only one course would seem to be open to the United States and the other NATO powers: wholeheartedly to do what they can to facilitate the attainment of nationhood and lend support that will engender economic progress and political stability in formerly colonial lands.

"COMMONWEAL CATHOLICS"

THE EDITORS of The Commonweal have so frequently attempted to state the purpose and function of the magazine that some of our long-time subscribers have issued pleasant but weary complaints. The comments run something like this: "Please, we *know* what The Commonweal is by now. You needn't tell us once again," or "I don't really care how the magazine is described as long as I find it in my mailbox every week."

We have some sympathy with this position and it is with a measure of regret that we feel called upon to make, so early in this new year, some additional comments. We are prompted to do so, however, by a news story in the Brooklyn *Tablet*. According to the story, the discussion leader of a meeting conducted under the auspices of the New York Civil Liberties Union and devoted to "Freedom of Religion and Separation of Church and State" expressed strong opinions on many Church-State issues. He was, for example, opposed to released time for religious instruction; transportation of children to denominational schools; aids such as lunches and health-clinics for children in parochial schools; free school books. Since he had proclaimed himself a Catholic some participants expressed wonder at his position and one person asked if he were not, "in fact, a fallen-away Catholic." The discussion leader finally "admitted to being a 'Commonweal Catholic.' "

The obvious question arises: what does the term "Commonweal Catholic" mean? If it can be defined it means, we would suggest, a Catholic who finds himself in agreement with or sympathetic to the declared attitudes of The Commonweal. To judge only by our mail, the term does not apply to all our readers, not all of whom are Catholics and not all of whom are sympathetic—nor even to all our contributors, some of whom are regularly at odds with the prudential judgments the editors of the magazine make.

The fact that many Catholics describe themselves as "Commonweal Catholics" does not, of course, mean that the magazine is responsible for their deeds or actions any more than any other journal is responsible for its readers. For all we know, there may be, for example, people who refer to themselves as "*Tablet* Catholics," but we would not wish to hold the *Tablet* responsible for all their actions.

This does not mean, however, that "Commonweal Catholic" is a meaningless term. The term is an indication, we think, of the importance the magazine has for many of its readers, of an acceptance of the "Commonweal idea" the editors have so frequently tried to delimit. But it should not lead people to think that a "Commonweal Catholic"—or a *Tablet* Catholic—is thereby any the less Catholic.

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DARK PORTENTS FOR CUBA

DEVELOPMENTS in Cuba are saddening indeed to the overwhelming majority of Americans who greeted last year's revolution with sympathy and hope. The heroic fight of Fidel Castro and his men against the oppression and tyranny of the Batista regime won the admiration of free people all over the world, and Dr. Castro's repeated affirmations in behalf of justice and freedom seemed to herald a new dawn for the long-suffering Cuban people.

Since those hopeful days, however, the actions of the Castro regime have gradually diminished the confidence and good will of even the most friendly observers. In the beginning, the special historical and cultural circumstances surrounding the revolution led United States observers to discount much of the extremism and violence which marked the new government's activities. Fidel Castro himself is, after all, young and inexperienced. Too, the problems he inherited from the corrupt Batista government are enormous. Finally, his resentment of United States policy toward the deposed dictator and hostility towards foreign landlords and investors are not without a certain amount of basis in fact.

But Premier Castro and his government have gone far past the point of reasonable explanation, and along too many paths which were dubious even at first. Dr. Castro's denunciations of the United States, its government and sugar interests particularly, have dissipated whatever good will he initially enjoyed and alienated the only people willing to buy Cuba's sugar crop at a price which might shore up the island's sagging economy. His fierce attacks on foreign investors have succeeded in frightening away the capital investments Cuba must have if the Premier's own plans are to be accomplished.

The execution of the agrarian reform laws—which no one would deny were sorely needed—has been peremptory, chaotic and frequently illegal. To date, the chief result of the land reform has been not a more equitable distribution of the land but the creation of large state-controlled "cooperatives" which have been administered so erratically as to reduce sharply the nation's already inadequate agricultural productivity.

Politically, the story is even more disturbing. Dr. Castro has been inclining more and more towards his extreme left-wing, perhaps Communist, advisors, and he has responded with ferocity to all criticism from the right. The bloody military courts have been re-established, the death penalty authorized for "counter-revolutionary" activity, the right of habeas corpus revoked, telephones tapped, mail opened. A network of government agents has been extended to cover the whole population, and just recently Dr. Castro has urged all Cubans to act as informers on one another, to be alert for so much as a stray, overheard remark in criticism of his government. Even worse, this plea for "total" loyalty was coupled with an open class appeal, with the "middle and upper classes" branded as potential traitors, to be kept in line only by the vigilance of the workers who are the true Cuban patriots.

All this makes a sorry recitation, and its conclusion has to be an unhappy one. It seems inevitable that the Castro government's policies—both economic and political—will lead to more convulsions in Cuba's already stormy history as a state. What is perhaps most bitter about this development is that Fidel Castro was truly the liberator of his people, that the power he is wielding now so foolishly and cruelly derives from the very genuineness of his role as a heroic leader of his people.

A STRAW FROM IOWA?

AS FAR AS numbers go, the American farmer becomes less of a factor in national politics with every passing year. Yet as recently as 1948 he had much to do with the upset re-election of Harry Truman. In Congress the farm bloc no longer exists as any sort of monolith—representatives of varying commodity and regional interests too often go their separate ways. Nonetheless Mr. Rockefeller and other hopefuls continue to woo the farmer, while debate on Secretary Benson's responsibility for declining farm income is heated in many states.

The efforts to ascribe Congressman Kyl's recent victory in an Iowa by-election to Midwest support for Benson's policies have proved to be unconvincing. The district is normally Republican and, as so often is the case, other local political issues were also at stake. What the "farm states" do next fall will not change the complexion of the next Congress much, for the Democratic majority of incumbents is too great; in a close race, though, they might help decide the Presidency. Farm population may be down to twenty millions, but both parties are certain to make farm program an important platform plank.

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Efforts Toward Reunion

The Church Universal

The great obstacle which keeps the Eastern churches from Rome is their great fear of "Latinization"

by BEDE GRIFFITHS

IT IS NOT easy for a Catholic in the West to realize that the Latin Church is not the Catholic Church. Even if he is aware that there are Eastern rites within the Catholic Church, he probably thinks of them as curious survivals from the past, which have some historical interest but have little significance at the present time. It is true that the Eastern churches in communion with Rome are often small in number and have been reduced to a shadow of their former greatness, but their value and significance remain immense.

They are a living witness to the great fact that the Catholic Church is not merely the Church of the West but also the East, and not merely of Eastern Europe but of Asia and Africa. "The Catholic Church," said Pope Benedict XV, "is neither Latin nor Greek nor Slav but universal." He might equally well have said that the Catholic Church is Latin *and* Greek *and* Slav, and he might have added Syrian and Egyptian. It is of particular importance for us at the present time to realize this universal character of the Church. Christianity has come to be regarded as the religion of the West, and it is too often forgotten that it was an Asiatic religion before it was European, and that in the early days of the Church the principal Sees were those of Antioch, Alexandria and Rome, representing Asia, Africa and Europe.

This vision of the universality of the Church is something which belongs not merely to the past but also to the future, and we need to keep it constantly before our minds. The announcement of an Ecumenical Council by the present Pope has raised great expectations that there will be a move towards the reunion of Christendom, especially in regard to the Eastern churches. But we must always remember that the great obstacle which keeps the Eastern churches from Rome is their fear of "Latinization." The Latin Church has become so vast and so impressive in its organization that the lesser churches feel that they will be absorbed into it and lose their individuality.

It must be remembered that it is not merely a question of rites and ceremonies or even of language. The Eastern churches stand for a different tradition of Christianity, a different way of life and thought, which is yet essentially as orthodox and Catholic as the Latin. They have not only their own liturgy but also their own theology and spirituality, which are derived from the most ancient traditions of the Church. They look back to the great Greek Fathers and Doctors of the Church, St. Athanasius, St. John Chrysostom, St. Basil and St. Gregory and to the Egyptian and Syrian Fathers who at that time laid securely the foundations of the monastic life.

I HAVE myself only begun to realize the significance of the Eastern rites since I have been living in South India, where most Catholics belong to the Syrian rite. The Church in India is said to have been founded by the Apostle St. Thomas and to be as ancient therefore as the Roman Church itself. Whether this is so or not, it has certainly been in India since the fourth century and is a wonderful example of that expansion of the Syrian Church which took place in the first centuries of Christian history. When we think of the expansion of the early Church we tend to think of its extension to Greece and Rome and then to France and Spain and the West. We sometimes forget that its expansion to the East was no less impressive. We know that Antioch was the first place where the "disciples came to be called Christians"; it is therefore in a special sense, after Jerusalem, the Mother of all the churches, and it was from Antioch that the Gospel was carried to the East. During the first four centuries it spread all over Palestine, Syria, Mesopotamia and Persia and the number of its martyrs was equal to that of the churches in the West. It was the first to witness the birth of

Dom Bede Griffiths, O.S.B., recently returned to India after attending an international liturgical conference at Nijmegen, Holland.

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monasticism after Egypt, and the Syrian monks rivaled, not only in numbers and austerity but also in holiness, their fellow monks in Egypt.

BUT WHAT is of quite extraordinary interest is that this Syrian Christianity was carried after this not only to India but also right across Asia to China. In his book on the Mongol Mission, Mr. Christopher Dawson has shown that the Mongols of central Asia were at one time very nearly converted to Christianity and that even the Chinese Emperor nearly became a Christian. It is true that Syrian Christianity was by this time affected by the Nestorian heresy, but we are increasingly recognizing that the separation of the Syrian and Egyptian churches in the fifth century from Catholic unity was the result not so much of heresy as of national feeling. It marks the tragic turning point when the Eastern peoples began to separate from the West. The invasion of Islam came later in the seventh century and gradually all these churches of Asia and Africa were overwhelmed. At the present day only small groups survive after centuries of Islamic domination, the majority still separated from Rome, but some of them reunited. If one stays in a city like Beirut today, one gets some sense of the vitality and strength of these ancient churches. In Beirut one can find Syrian Catholics and Syrian Orthodox, Greek Catholics and Greek Orthodox, as well as Armenian and other rites, but the strongest Church is that of the Catholic Maronites, numbering over half a million, consisting of Syrian Christians who were reunited with Rome in the twelfth century.

It must be confessed that those churches which have been reunited with Rome, such as the Maronites in Lebanon and the Syro-Malabar in South India, which numbers over a million, have suffered severely from Latinization, and this forms one of the greatest obstacles to the reunion of the other Eastern churches. The case of the Syro-Malabar Church is, in fact, one of the great scandals of church history. When the Portuguese came to India in the sixteenth century they found the flourishing Syrian Church. At first their relations with it were friendly, and they accepted it as Catholic. But when some Nestorian formulas were found in the books of the Syrian Church (due to the influence, no doubt, of the Persian Church from which they received their orders), the Portuguese proceeded not only to eliminate these elements but to mutilate the whole rite so as to make it as like to the Latin rite as possible. The result of this disastrous action was to drive half of the Church into a schism, which has yet to be healed. Happily, however, the Syro-Malabar rite is now being restored to its original form according to the instructions of the Holy See, and when the restoration is completed the Syro-Malabar Church will have once again its ancient liturgy.

This is but one example of a process, always at work, which tends to impose Latin rites and customs on the Eastern churches, which can only be overcome when Catholics as a whole come to recognize the true value of these Eastern rites and traditions. As I have said, it is not merely a matter of rites and ceremonies. The Eastern churches have their own languages, some of them like the Syriac and the Coptic (Egyptian) now "dead" languages, but generally translated into the vernacular, in this case Arabic. This is itself one of the great advantages of the Eastern rites, that they have retained the custom of the ancient Church of using the vernacular in the liturgy, so that all the people are able to understand it and to take part in it. They also have their own gestures, characteristically Eastern, which are very different from those of the Latin rite. In the Syrian rite, for instance, it is customary to stand with hands outstretched in prayer with palms upwards and to bow down in adoration by prostrating on both knees and touching the ground with the forehead. These are gestures which are found all over the Middle East, among Moslems no less than Christians, and constitute a typical Eastern attitude of prayer.

WITH THESE different languages and gestures there go different forms of thought and expression. The Latin liturgy is peculiarly sober and restrained both in language and gestures, but the Eastern liturgies prefer a much more exuberant mode of expression. The Greek liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, for instance, is full of the most profound symbolism and is one of the most beautiful expressions of Christian piety in the world. But it is the Syrian liturgy which is distinguished above all for its poetry. It seems that while it was the Greek genius which gave to the Church its theology and the Latin genius its organization, it was the Syrian genius which gave it its poetry. The earliest Christian poetry which we know, the Odes of Solomon, are believed to have come from Antioch in the second century, and both the *Gloria in Excelsis* and the beautiful evening hymn, "Joyous Light," of the Greek Vespers were originally Syrian compositions. But it was with St. Ephrem in Mesopotamia in the fourth century that the Syrian genius found its true expression. St. Ephrem composed hymns and songs to be sung by the people, so that it is said even women and children used to sing them in the street and it was from this that the custom of singing hymns was introduced into the Church.

This has remained typical of the Syrian liturgy to the present day. Instead of Psalms which take up so large a part of the Latin liturgy, the Syrian liturgy is composed of songs, that is original compositions, often of great beauty, in a regular rhythm put to music. These songs are mostly profound meditations on the Scriptures, and this is what gives the Syrian liturgy its most

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important character. It is rooted in the Bible and the Biblical mode of thought. In other words it is entirely Semitic in character. It is true that it owes its theology to the Greeks but it was the Syrian genius that translated this theology into poetry, so that the liturgy became a living expression of theology. It is this that gives the Syrian liturgy its great value at the present day. It gives us a true Biblical theology. It is almost as though the Hebrew genius, which gave us the Bible, had begun to flower again. The poetry springs from the same soil which gave us the poetry of the Old Testament and the Canticles of the New. It is in fact for the most part a deep meditation on the Old Testament in the light of the New, and on the New Testament in the light of a developed theology.

IN OTHER words we have in the Syrian Church, as in all the Eastern churches to some extent, a theology which has not lost its roots in the Bible and the liturgy. It has been our misfortune in the West that theology and liturgy have grown apart, so that theology has become a science separated from prayer and prayer has in turn become separated from theology and become sentimental. But in the Eastern Church, liturgy has always remained the great school of theology and theology has never lost its contact with the Biblical mode of thought. Instead of being an abstract rational system, as it has become in the West, it has retained a mystical and symbolic character, which makes it a school of contemplation not of abstract thought. No doubt, to have developed a rational and scientific system of theology, as Scholasticism has done, is something of permanent value and a necessary stage in the development of the Church. But theologians today are feeling the need to return to the sources of theology, to the Bible and the Liturgy, and to recover that unity of theology, liturgy and spirituality which was characteristic of the early Church.

It is here that the Eastern churches have so much to give. The reconciliation of the Eastern churches would be the means of the recovery of precious elements in the Christian tradition, which have been obscured, though never actually lost, in the development of the Church in the West. It would mean the recovery of the Biblical tradition of theology, of a theology which keeps near to the symbolical thought of the Bible and never loses its mystical character; it would mean the recovery of a liturgical tradition which acts as a living source of theology and enables the people by its symbolism to participate in the deepest experience of the Church's life, in the fullness of the mystery of Christ; and finally it would mean the recovery of the full sense of the Church as the mystical Body of Christ, each Church and each congregation representing the Body of Christ and all united in an organic whole, witnessing to the mystery of the presence of Christ on earth. These are the goals which are being sought by the Biblical movement, the liturgical movement and the development of the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ in the West, but it is only with the union of the Eastern churches that we can hope for their full realization.

In this way one might hope that the Church would recover her full catholicity, uniting both East and West in a unity which transcends both time and space. She would appear then no longer as a Western European organization, but as belonging equally to Europe, Asia and Africa (and of course to America and Australia). At present the Latin liturgy has been spread all over the world, but this extension of a uniform rite in the East and West is not according to the original genius of the Church. In the early Church, rites and languages were always adapted to the different peoples to whom the Gospel was preached. One may hope that if the Latin rite is translated everywhere into the vernacular (as there is good reason to hope that it will be) and is able to adapt its external customs, its music and vestments and ceremonial, to the requirements of the different cultures in which it is found, it may become a true expression of the religious life of these different peoples.

But it would seem clear that the Eastern liturgies have also a very important part to play in this development. The Syrian rite seems to be particularly adapted to Asia, not only to the Middle East where it has long been established but also to the Far East, where it once penetrated so deeply and where it still survives in South India. It would seem also that the Egyptian rite (which is said in Arabic), and still more the Ethiopian rite, have a very important place in the African Church. The Ethiopian rite, I have been told, is a distinctive African development of the ancient Coptic rite and, by the use of music, drums and dances, as well as a distinctive church architecture derived from native tradition, is wonderfully adapted to the African genius.

BUT STILL more important than the external forms of the liturgy (though these are of in-

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calculable importance) is the inner spirit of the Eastern rites. In them we find the true genius of the Christian East. By their symbolic and mystical character they will make an appeal to the Eastern mind which the more sober Latin rite can never have. We are now living at a moment in history when East and West are coming into contact as they have never done before. The people of Asia and Africa are awaking to a new life, in which they are becoming conscious of the deep values of their own cultural inheritance, while they are adapting themselves to the customs of the West. It is essential that the Church should be presented to these people as the embodiment of the genius both of East and West, as an institution which belongs equally to East and West, adapting herself to every human culture because in her inmost essence she transcends all and has it in her power to break down the "wall of partition" between East and West and to reconcile all men in one Body in Christ.

It would be foolish to expect an Ecumenical Council to achieve all this, but we can hope and pray that it may lead to a better understanding with the Eastern churches. Above all we can try to cultivate in ourselves a truly Catholic spirit, seeing beyond the boundaries of the Latin Church and the civilization which has grown up under its influence in the West, so that we can include the great cultures of India, China and Japan in our vision, together with the Islamic world and those primitive but profound cultures which have shaped the African mind. We should be able to see all these cultures as so many fields in which the Gospel has still to be preached and where the Church can grow to her full stature as the Bride of Christ, *circumdata varietate.*

Poems Proper to the Season

SAINT STEPHEN

That day stones fell
I stood them to a cairn and died
unknowable, a mound of dust for heaven
to make man of.
That day stones beat
like stone beasts for a forced entry
to eat my heart: I prayed awhile
then opened brief and tossed them meat.
They ate and died of it: unproofed against
my living phial, great love.
That day
stones flew like hail of stones at first:
my dolorous flesh took their brute will
in heavy sighing: but stones transformed
to tongues, whispered at every wound:
welcome.
That day stones flowered
a dark-rose field Christ walked and gathered.

DANIEL BERRIGAN, S. J.

THE FEAST OF THE CIRCUMCISION

The New Year turns on a knife.
Coincidences of time look down
into the pools of eternity.

The precocious blade asserts tradition.
The Child cries. The priest's beard
defies all Assyria.

Rome is a sprawling thing. The Man
will stand against that, arms wide
in an old barbaric gesture

sanctified to symbol. Time
circumcises all, excises
flesh and forgetfulness,

bares the divine doings. The years
transubstantiate Mary's milk
into the Bread that bleeds world-girdling wine.

And the women of the temple smiled and wept
seeing the minute rubies of eternity
splash to chastity the marble floor.

HERBERT A. KENNY.

EPIPHANY: FOR THE ARTIST

The furred magnificence, the precious stones:
Paint me old men, flesh rags on windy bones

Paint me old men, salt spectres gaunt with years,
Old men and wise; what wisdom but in tears

Old men and wise and wealthy: to accrue
Poverty hinds and herdsmen never knew,
Gifts to be borne in desolation's lieu

Gifts to be borne, offered on broken knees
To Child, Light, God; conceive it how you please
But paint me these.

ELIZABETH SEWELL.

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A CATHOLIC PRESIDENT

IF ANYTHING could convince even the paranoiac anti-Catholic that the hierarchy is not seeking political power in the United States, the Bishops' recent statement should have done so. With a Catholic candidate for the Presidential nomination very much in the news, and in the midst of a national debate about whether every Catholic is not *ipso facto* disqualified for the Presidency, the Bishops chose to talk about birth control, the most divisive issue in American life.

That does not sound very Machiavellian to me. Surely a hierarchy more intent on getting one of its own in the White House than on doing its religious duty would not make its candidate's path so difficult. But perhaps it is just as well that the question was raised at this time, for it forces people to face up to the real issues involved in the Catholic President controversy. Up to now that controversy has been dominated by two groups, one which poses false dilemmas no Catholic President will ever have to face, and another which is so imbued with the spirit of good will and tolerance it talks as if there really were no problem. Needless to say, neither group has been convincing except to its own partisans.

I should think a realistic discussion of the issue would have to focus on the terms of the questions—what is a Catholic? what is a President?

A Catholic, of course, can be defined in any number of different ways. But in this context the most important factor hinges on the Catholic understanding of the Christian Church. Unlike the Protestant, the Catholic believes that the Church is a visible body, hierarchically organized, which speaks with God-given authority on questions of faith and morals. And let it be said, though it should be unnecessary, that the Catholic accepts this authority not because of a slavish adherence to an ecclesiastical system but from a profound conviction that the right of the Church to pronounce on faith and morals is God-given.

It should be remembered that the infallibility of the Church, one of the least understood of Catholic doctrines, is very clearly defined. It is neither so sprawling as to make every parish priest's pulpit pronouncements eternally binding nor so narrow as to make the formal statements of Popes and Bishops a mere exercise of private, however exalted, judgment. Yet the important point is that ultimately the individual Catholic's conscience is formed by the teachings of his Church.

Normally, the way a man forms his conscience is nobody else's political business. But Americans are naturally, and I would say quite properly, concerned with what manner of man they are electing to the nation's highest office. We all have legitimate interest in how the President reaches his ideas of wrong and right, good and bad. In the case of Protestant Presidents, with the Protestant emphasis on individual judgment, it has largely been a question of sizing up the man himself. The influence of his Church, we have been led to believe, was comparatively indirect. A Catholic President, on the other hand, would have to acknowledge that the teachings of the Church are of prime importance to him.

Now, the teachings of the Church are not kept hidden. Others may not agree, they may even believe that the Catholic is living in bondage and ignorance, but the Church has not kept its moral teachings a family secret.

That does not mean of course that for the Catholic there is any simple transference from general principle to concrete case. A Catholic President's solution to a given moral problem would not be easily predictable. But the moral principles by which he reaches conscientious conclusions would be universally known.

As for the second question—what is a President?—I take it that a President is just what the Constitution says he is, the nation's chief executive officer. In some of the discussions about a Catholic President one would think that the Chief Executive were an Oriental potentate who could do exactly what he wanted to do. From others, one could get the impression that the office is such that the man who occupies it has no need for the exercise of conscience. The truth, again, is somewhere in the middle.

The President has genuine authority, but it is Constitutional authority, exercised within a certain limited sphere of action and checked by the other two branches of Government. A Catholic President would be subject to exactly the same restrictions of law and democratic rule that all our Protestant Presidents have had to face. Just as Catholic and Jewish citizens, because of the Constitution, would continue to feel safe with even a highly devout Protestant churchman in the White House, so should reasonable Protestants rely ultimately not on the tolerance of the President but on the guarantees of the Constitution, not the least of which is the guaranty of religious liberty.

It is in the President's legitimate exercise of his personal powers that the religious question can be properly considered. The real issue is whether a man whose conscience is formed by the Catholic understanding is qualified to lead the nation, whether—to put it crudely—the Catholic conscience is an inferior conscience which somehow distorts the judgment of even the most superbly qualified men.

JOHN COGLEY.

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Have the battles of the thirties really been won?

Case for Discontent

by JOHN C. CORT

ANYONE who knows anything about Catholicism in America knows that there are within it at least two camps, usually described as liberal and conservative, when it comes to things social and economic.

Those who know a little more are aware that there has long been a division on the left between the Catholic Worker agrarians, who reject the whole industrial system, and those who accept mass production but seek to reform and inform it with the spirit of Christ and a little sensible planning.

Although there was some question during the thirties which of these two tendencies would win the allegiance of the laity (at least of those who were interested enough to care), there seems no doubt now that the agrarian gospel is no longer the rallying cry for the young that it was back in the days when Eric Gill, Peter Maurin, Dorothy Day and the Chesterbelloc were aiming their shafts at the vulnerable citadels of capitalism.

Since then capitalism made its comeback, agrarianism slipped to the status of a mere romantic dream, and there remained nothing for the more realistic liberals but to argue among themselves. This they have now proceeded to do. We find a division developing in the past few years between, first, those who feel that American capitalism has developed into what is all in all a pretty good system and that most of the major battles of the thirties have been won and should be forgotten, and, second, those who remain convinced that the Affluent Society is still a long way from the image of a Christian social order and that most of the old battles continue in somewhat less dramatic forms.

The latter group seem to get most of their support from the lay organizations in the labor field, notably the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists, the Young Christian Workers, and the Catholic Labor Conference of Detroit. Monsignor Reynold Hillenbrand, national chaplain of the Y.C.W., is one of their more concerned and important spokesmen.

On the other side are doughty speakers and writers like Father John Cronin, S.S., assistant director of the Social Action Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, and Father Edward Duff, S.J., able and scholarly editor of *Social Order,* the high-class Jesuit magazine devoted to social and economic problems.

The controversy broke out in the open at last summer's meeting of the National Catholic Social Action Conference in St. Louis. Father Duff was the keynote speaker. (Unfortunately, he was not there to give it, or defend it, himself.) Most of it was an excellent analysis of current problems, goals and challenges for Catholic social action. With this there were a few sentences echoing previous statements of his in defense of the American status quo. I seized on one or two of these to question, but I am willing to confess here and now that it was the original statements, not the echo, about which I was mainly concerned. At any rate, this was enough to set off the firing, which, fortunately, has been on a pretty good-natured plane to date.

LAST January Father Duff published in *Social Order* a long piece called "Property in the American Environment," which was the text of a talk he had given the previous summer before a group of European Jesuit sociologists at a meeting in Berlin. Father Duff was obviously smarting at the time from the patronizing, half-baked criticism of all things American that one hears in Europe.

He gave an able defense of the more defensible elements of the American economy and included with it some original and provocative reflections on the need to re-examine Catholic theory on the subject of private property in the light of new forms and aspects of property in a highly industrialized, unionized, regulated society. In a nutshell, he said that Catholic demands for the widespread distribution of private property may be a bit old hat in view of the growing control that workers enjoy over large corporate enterprises and accumulated wealth by way of union contracts, pension funds, etc., as well as in the growing ownership of homes, cars, and so on.

I have neither the space nor the scholarship necessary to evaluate this theory except to hazard that I think its value is not enough to bridge the gap between

Mr. Cort, formerly a contributing editor of The Commonweal, is well known for his writings on social questions.

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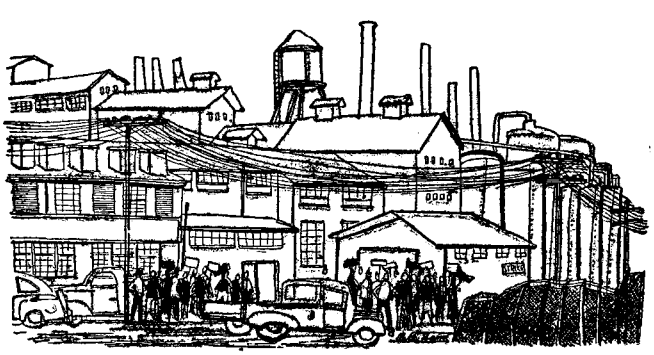
what we have here in America and the words of Pius XI in *Quadragesimo Anno:* "We deem it advisable that the wage-contract should, when possible, be modified somewhat by a contract of partnership. . . . In this way wage-earners are made sharers in some sort in the ownership, or the management, or the profits."

A few other statements in his article I feel compelled to question, however, and at length. One of these concludes a passage in which Father Duff quotes George Meany, president of the A.F.L.-C.I.O., speaking to a convention of the National Association of Manufacturers in 1955. Meany had given them the conservative pitch: "I believe in the free enterprise system completely. I believe in the return on capital investment. I believe in management's right to manage."

Father Duff comments, "I . . . believe that Mr. Meany's attitude demonstrates the absence of a class consciousness in the United States. To assert that America is a classless society is to paraphrase the fact of common assumptions on the role of government, for example, a generalized consensus on the desired shape of society, common attitudes on personal rights (passing over, for the moment, the national shame of segregation . . .)."

This reference to Meany's appearance before the N.A.M. in December of 1955 struck a responsive chord, or discord, in my memory. I crawled into the further recesses of the upstairs closet and dug out a copy of The Commonweal dated December 30, 1955. It reminded me that I had visited this same convention, which was being held in New York the same week that the A.F.L. and C.I.O. were merging in another hall downtown.

While there I had the dubious pleasure of hearing the N.A.M. president, Cola Parker, deliver himself of what I described then as "the most appalling mish-mash of unregenerate reaction and labor-baiting I have heard in many years." Parker lamented that "we're already well on our way to the achievement of the Communist state as blueprinted by Karl Marx," lumping the Eisenhower Administration and the New and Fair Deals into one sweeping anathema. Among the roadmarks proving our progress Marx-ward, Mr. Parker cited "a heavy progressive or graduated income tax" and "free education for all in public schools."



George Meany's appearance I described as follows: "The next day Meany visited the N.A.M. convention and gave a short, conciliatory talk which tried to reassure the nervous industrialists that labor was not going to take over the halls of either government or industry. He was rewarded with a slashing attack on the labor movement in general and the new A.F.L.-C.I.O. in particular by Charles R. Sligh, Jr., board chairman of the N.A.M. Afterwards, in the presence of newspapermen, Meany and Sligh engaged in a heated and slightly bitter exchange."

TO PARAPHRASE the old saying, it takes two to make a classless society. And it is indeed ironic that Father Duff should seize upon a speech at this convention to prove a point which other speeches at the same convention so completely disproved.

It is over four years since that convention, but the complexion of the N.A.M. has not noticeably changed since that week in the Waldorf-Astoria. No one will maintain that the class struggle here is the same kind of profound, acrimonious and ideological cleavage that one sees in Europe and points East and West. But to say it does not exist seems a bit over-optimistic.

Since World War II there have been six strikes in the steel industry involving an average of 550,000 workers on each occasion. In 1946 they were out twenty-eight days, in 1949 it was forty-two days, in 1952 approximately fifty-nine days, in 1955 one day, in 1956 a total of thirty-six days. And the last was the longest and most bitter, perhaps just a prelude to another one early in 1960. This lasted a hundred and sixteen days. That's a total of two hundred eighty-two days on strike over a thirteen-year period.

The United Steelworkers is one of the most conservative unions in the American labor movement. Its president, David McDonald, has made some of the most pro-capitalist speeches ever heard from a labor leader anywhere in the world.

The shocking and disastrous failure of the steel industry to find a way to get along with the Steelworkers, and vice versa, is one egregious example why Father Duff is off target when he says that "America is a classless society."

"Common assumptions on the role of government"? Cola Parker and his successors at the helm of the N.A.M. do not share them. The Republican Party may have reluctantly made its peace with New Deal legislation in the social and economic area, but I see no evidence of this in the forums of the Chamber of Commerce, outside of a rare, soon-muffled murmur from an Eric Johnston or a Paul Hoffman. The bulletins of the Chamber that I see seem to spend most of their space agitating for more action by government to prevent union shop contracts and for bigger, better and tougher Landrum-Griffin bills.

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"A generalized consensus on the desired shape of society"? It is true that most of us reject Marxism, but how much agreement is there, either among management or labor, on the value of profit-sharing, or the further sharing of management and ownership of industry that the Pope has called for? Thanks to John Brophy and Philip Murray, the C.I.O. for many years passed resolutions at its conventions calling for the Industry Council Plan, which many students of such things recognized as an American approximation of the papal plan for industrial democracy. But American management promptly branded it as "Socialism" and worse, and I have seen no evidence that George Meany is willing to accept it as part of the program of the merged A.F.L.-C.I.O. Where is this consensus?

Which reminds me. In his address to the N.C.S.A.C. in St. Louis last August, Father Duff disparaged in this way the efforts of Catholic social theorists in this country: "The essentials of the Bishops' 1919 Program having become—in answer to our national aspirations —part of our public law, we seem, as a group, left without anything very specific that we want by way of concrete, institutional social reform except perhaps a wistful notion that labor and management be brought together in quasi-permanent consultation."

This "wistful notion" looks from here, in the light of chronic class war in basic steel, like a pretty sound, hard-headed idea that may be precisely what the doctor ordered to cure a miserable situation. There is no reason whatever to belittle its importance. Even Meany has now come around to calling for a whither-are-we-drifting conference of labor and management at the top level.

It would be a good thing if Catholic theorists could come up with more specific suggestions. But let us not forget that their primary responsibility is to keep hammering on the broad and basic principles. It is when we begin to lose faith in these, as many apparently have, that we really have reason to worry.

The world is full of practical men. The function of the idealist is to preach the word in season and out of season, no matter how dull and unspecific it may sound to the men of affairs. Sooner or later the practical men will catch some of it and then it will not be long before the idealism is translated into workable, pragmatic forms. As a matter of fact, the appearance at St. Louis last summer, at long last, of an organized group of Catholic employers who are concerned with studying and applying the teachings of the social encyclicals gives us some reason to hope that our salvation may be nearer than we had come to believe.

THE ASSUMPTION by Father Duff that the Bishops' program of 1919 has become public law will also bear a little scrutiny. It is true that there is legislation on the books that is *supposed* to fill most of the needs that the Bishops called attention to forty years ago. (One notable exception is the need for national health insurance and sick benefits. Another is fair employment.) But in almost every area our current legislation leaves much to be desired. Low rates of compensation for unemployment, industrial accidents, old age pensions, minimum wages, etc., in many cases differing greatly from state to state, with many important exceptions not covered at all—these things should not fill us with satisfaction.

It appears that Father Duff has a filing cabinet stuffed with statistics proving that America has more bathtubs than anybody. My filing cabinet is a mess and mostly out-of-date, so I am not going to engage in a war of figures in an effort to prove that we may not all be as well off as he imagines. I do have a clipping from a recent speech of Senator Kennedy's and I don't know the source of his figures, but I assume that he can't afford to use anything but the best. He points out that 17,000,000 Americans are suffering from malnutrition, 15,000,000 live in substandard homes, 5,000,000 have no plumbing, and 7,000,000 families have an income of less than $2,000 a year.

I think this is enough to keep us from feeling smug, if we are looking for statistical reasons for a sense of *malaise*. But you really don't need figures. Just walk through the slums, slowly and reflectively, in the city nearest you. Even the towns have their share of misery. I suppose I am prejudiced by the fact that I sit in negotiations every week beating my brains out against the rugged wall of resistance of publishers who have skilled reporters on their staffs who are making $75 a week after ten and twelve years of experience. These fellows are class-conscious as anything. And poor. And their employers are more class-conscious than they are.

Much of this is inevitable in a world conditioned by original sin and forever labeled by the Church as a vale of tears. But very much is not inevitable. In any case we are still under orders to do what we can to see that the Kingdom of God comes on earth as it is in heaven. The function of a Christian is not necessarily to cry, "Woe! woe!" on any and every occasion. But the tradition of the prophets and saints seems to be more often critical of than complimentary to the society in which they lived. Christ called down a blessing on those who hunger and thirst after justice. And He did say that "inasmuch as you did it unto one of these, the least of My brethren, you did it unto Me."

Maybe I am wrong, but it seems to me that when we find ourselves in an attitude which is mainly one of defending the status quo, then we are slipping into a position which is not consistent with the best of our traditions. As long as there is one man alive in the world who is the victim of injustice, the Christian can never be content.

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THE STAGE

"ONLY CONNECT . . ."

THE MOTIF of the educated heart—what Mr. E. M. Forster, in the epigraph to *Howard's End* I have chosen as title, sees as the aristocratic crown of human energy and feeling—is given various statement in three plays of this moment's theater. All move, easily acquiescent, within that circle of contemporary manners Mr. Francis Fergusson calls "the diminished scene of rationalism": none compels the imagination to any labor beyond that of recognition. Their gentle discretions, their calculated stresses, are solely a reflex of sensibility; in them, one may rest with a kind of tepid indolence, not disagreeable.

Of the three, Mr. William Inge's "A Loss of Roses" (*at the Eugene O'Neill*)—played by Miss Betty Field in vacuous absentia and by Miss Carol Haney with a slushy indulgence sure to be admired—need engage no one at length. Its sobriety, sincere feeling and dim rectitude are unexceptionable, yet so drastic is the recession from those felicities of domestic pathos of which this dramatist is capable, that all my axiomatic faith in the artist's right to intermittent failure was cruelly levied. "A Loss of Roses" is not, however, an interesting failure, and what is really shocking in the event is the cynicism of those others—producers, director—who thought such muddled private pathology (to which we are all privately entitled) ever to be a public theatrical possibility. The harsh response to "A Loss of Roses" is, then, wholly a just rebuke, yet its effect on Mr. Inge—who observed, in one of the singular *apologiae* of contemporary letters, that "it's the New York first-night audience that gives you your definition of yourself"—one hesitates to imagine.

MR. PETER SHAFFER'S "Five Finger Exercise" (*at the Music Box*), a London export certain to repeat its success here, is the queerest divertissement of serious assumption on the Broadway scene. At moments, flicked by its social wit and fancy (Mr. John Osborne, shall we say, in a sanguine vein), I thought how admirable the whole might have been if shaped exclusively to a comic mode. Again, watching the members of this uncertain family remorselessly chew each other's entrails, I remembered mornings in London when I stood, razor in hand, fascinated by the misadventures of "Mrs. Dale's Diary," that wireless documentary of middle-class British sociology, with its obsessive—and highly diverting—emphasis on *blame* (not guilt). The tragic, I recollect thinking, is not native to these people: their righteousness will make allowance for nothing so immutable: that is at once their glory and their flaw. "Five Finger Exercise," to be sure, is considerably more than plausible moral doodling; it offers to the ear and the attention, if not quite the mind, interests elsewhere denied this season. And its sheer tangle of appetites and hostile wills, of misguided egotisms and misread affections, is very much what we may call *good theater,* affording to the cast—in which only Miss Jessica Tandy seems too dissonantly whipped-up—an occasion for that seamless ensemble playing which is one of the splendors of British craft.

THE PLANGENT "Silent Night, Lonely Night" (*at the Morosco*), by Mr. Robert Anderson, is the most sophisticated of this trio, the most elusive, tender and hushed. In a winter inn, two private persons—Mr. Henry Fonda, heavily mannered but with all his fine-thewed American nobility, and that enchanting *princesse lointaine* of sweater and skirt, Miss Barbara Bel Geddes—come to the middle of the journey. Love is their theme: its deceits, the need for it, fidelity: all the intermittences of the heart. No, the substance is not dramatic, except as all feeling is; yes, Mr. Anderson falters in attempting to make it so. Still, to those with my taste, amounting to indulgence, for the subtler moralities of eros and agape, Mr. Anderson's play will give off—in its deepest echoes—a ripeness and resonance of spirit much to be regarded.

Yet in a final sense, "Silent Night, Lonely Night" crystallizes the deficiencies of all these variations on Mr. E. M. Forster's passionate persuasion to "connect." For its aphorisms, its melancholy truths and avowals, are convincing only as moral philosophy is convincing, their existence is purely conceptual; they come to us without the weight of any specific, *embodied* experience. They lack, one might say, the energy of actuality. So too with Mr. William Inge's grade school Freudianism, which isolates a human phenomenon—in this instance, the Oedipal situation—sets it up as a constant point or psychological reference, and then imagines that somehow a sense of felt life will ensue. So too, even, with Mr. Shaffer's push-pull, click-click method, where great forces out of life are manipulated with a facility which, as Mr. Stark Young remarked elsewhere, is not necessarily insincere through intention, but may be so through lack of depth.

Indeed, the whole of "Five Finger Exercise," with its accustomed pathos of the family impasse, its dogmatic sense of individualism and unflagging Ibsenite hunt after the truth concealed—all most honorable themes—makes a drastically ironic comment on the pace theater has kept with other arts in this century. Mr. Forster's "only connect" flooded with passion and light the conscious spiritual energy of a generation: would it be impertinent to suggest that the tide must move now with another impulse? RICHARD HAYES.

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THE SCREEN

THE VOICE OF THE TURTLES

ANYONE familiar with Tennessee Williams' plays, or the movies made from them, knows that they usually involve strong subject matter. Williams likes to drop a bomb in his audience's laps and he knows how to wrap it in some of the theater's most poetic prose. He also knows how to convey dramatically, excitingly, the dreadful loneliness of men who cannot communicate with their fellow men. In "Suddenly, Last Summer," Williams drops one big bomb in the climax, but so skillful is the script Gore Vidal and Tennessee Williams have devised from this short play, that the audience is ready for almost anything—even the shocking revelations that turn up in the last few scenes.

"Suddenly, Last Summer" is mainly concerned with two women: wealthy Violet Venable, a widow who never gives or gave a thought to her husband but who was devoted to her son and is now obsessed by the memory of this sensitive poet who died mysteriously and suddenly in Europe last summer; and Mrs. Venable's lovely niece-by-marriage, Catherine, who has been in a private home for the insane after her traumatic experiences in Europe. Under Joseph L. Mankiewicz' excellent direction, these roles are superbly played by Katharine Hepburn and Elizabeth Taylor.

Fortunately for the niece, the skilled young surgeon (Montgomery Clift) whom Mrs. Venable has hired, and to whom she has offered a million dollars for the state asylum if he will perform a lobotomy on Catherine, moves cautiously in his diagnosis. And he soon realizes that Catherine is by no means as disturbed as her aunt insists. To prove his point, the doctor puts the girl under mild sedation and lets her tell her story to the family assembled at the Venable house. It is a story as chilling and decadent as anything ever told in the movies.

Dominating the film, although he never appears except sketchily in Catherine's grim flashback tale, is Sebastian Venable, the poet who wrote only one poem a year and whose thinking was determined by an early experience which he insisted was a manifestation of the face of God. Visiting the Galapagos Islands with his mother, he watched carnivorous birds devouring the newly-hatched turtles as they tried to make their way to the safety of the sea. The death and devouring symbols are used again and again in the film—in Sebastian's garden where Mrs. Venable feeds flies to the insectivorous Venus's Fly Trap; in his living room where hangs a large picture of St. Sebastian; and, most shockingly of all, in Catherine's story which reveals how the beautiful and unwitting girl was used by the homosexual Sebastian to procure boys, boys who finally devoured their evil seducer.

Obviously "Suddenly, Last Summer" is only for mature audiences who take their movies seriously. If the film was not well conceived and executed, it would seem no more than a horror thriller or a bad joke about perversion. But Sam Spiegel has given it a first-rate production with stunning black-and-white photography by Jack Hildyard and with Oliver Messel's sets, fitted perfectly to the atmosphere of the moneyed and decadent New Orleans mansion, the two asylums and the Spanish beach.

As a study in evil, "Suddenly, Last Summer" is reminiscent of *The Turn of the Screw;* and like Henry James' story or Richard Hughes' *High Wind in Jamaica,* it must be presented in a half-real, half-fantasy manner. Director Mankiewicz is particularly successful in this and is greatly aided by Hepburn as the evilly doting mother, Taylor as the frightened and perplexed girl, Clift as the thoughtful and justice-seeking surgeon, and a supporting cast that includes Mercedes McCambridge, Gary Raymond and Albert Dekker. One doesn't really believe "Suddenly, Last Summer" with its tale of the misguided poet and his obsessed mother; but neither does one quite disbelieve it—and the total effect is like that of a frightening nightmare that one can't fully shake off.

THE FRENCH have also sent over a poetic nightmare, a modernized version of the Orpheus and Eurydice legend. At first glance, the idea of updating this story (about the poet whose music was so beautiful it moved even stones and beasts, and whose love for his wife was so great that he went to Hades after her when she died and almost succeeded in bringing her out) seems like interesting and exciting material for the movies. The production given it by Sacha Gordine in "Black Orpheus" is extraordinarily handsome, set as it is in Rio de Janeiro with a good-looking all-Negro cast and some lovely color photography of the city and its environs. Scriptwriter Jacques Viot follows the legend fairly closely except for one inexplicable major alteration. In this version, Orpheus, a guitar-playing streetcar conductor, is engaged to Mira, but when the country girl, Eurydice, arrives in Rio, he falls head-over-heels in love with her and has to spend a lot of time evading his furious fiancée.

Directed by Marcel Camus, one of France's "new wave" directors, "Black Orpheus" has some very effective poetic moments, and its Negro cast, especially Marpessa Dawn, Breno Mello and Lourdes de Oliveira in the leads, come through well. The Rio Carnival is also used well in telling the story, but unfortunately Director Camus must have fallen in love with all the footage he took of the carnival and this part of the film is far too long.

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Although it has some good cinema, the movie as a whole did not quite come off. Unlike "Suddenly, Last Summer" which skillfully combines fantasy and realism, "Black Orpheus" uses a fantastic tale and sets it in a realistic Rio with native actors who often play for laughs when the subject matter is indeed no laughing matter; furthermore the French film makers introduce additional sex into this poetic legend. As a primitive movie and as a stunt, "Black Orpheus" is by no means dull; but the modernized version falls far short of the famous tragedy. PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

COMMUNICATIONS

"POET OF ANGLICANISM"

Tucson, Ariz.

TO THE EDITORS: May I crave the hospitality of your letter column to comment on Alan Neame's discussion of *The Collected Poems* of John Betjeman [Dec. 4]? I quite realize that Mr. Neame writes as a Roman Catholic. Therefore, although I am an Anglican priest, I do not take issue with what I know to be the conscientious theological and ecclesiastical attitude of the review in question. But I would like to comment as a Christian on certain of his statements which I believe are broader and less intellectually self-disciplined than I have been led to expect from a long reading of your magazine.

Neame says that the Anglican tradition is "dense with unresolved contradictions." I would propose to the consideration of your readers that truth itself, at its profoundest, cannot be completely understood by the human mind, so that it always appears to be filled with contradictions difficult of resolution. The Anglican tradition is not likely to be widely understood in an age which wants its truth in neat, carefully organized packages, and finds unanswered and unanswerable questions too uncomfortable to live with. I believe that this accounts for the astonishing continued popularity of fundamentalist Protestantism in one quarter and for the ideological success of Marxist Communism in another. Both purport to have ready answers to all questions that men might ask. May I go on to say, with all charity, that I believe this accounts for the Roman Catholic definition of infallibility in the nineteenth century?

Surely Mr. Neame, as an Englishman, knows more about the Church of England than to say half of English Anglicans quietly pray for the Pope, while the other half believe the Eucharist to be a memorial supper and no more. Any careful observer knows that, in fact, there is a fringe at one end of Anglicanism who are clearly papalist, and a fringe at the other end who are militantly anti-Catholic, but the great modern fact of Anglicanism is that most of the faithful fall somewhere in the middle of the scale. They believe the Catholic religion but deny that papal infallibility is a necessary part of it, and they believe also that our Lord Jesus Christ is present in the Eucharist in His sacrificed Body, but hesitate to define how. Within this great central section of the Anglican Communion, the widely-bruited tensions of our Church are very largely ceremonial rather than doctrinal.

Two other comments, and I have done. Your author cannot mean that the Episcopal Church in this country is truly able to re-Catholicize itself, since this is a theological absurdity. He may mean, as I think he means, that many Episcopalians are beginning to think as Catholics, though no amount of such thinking can bring Catholicism to a Church which does not already possess it. Episcopalians feel, rather, that they are in the process of rediscovering the Catholicism already inherent and essential in their part of the Church. A sense of obligation to history should compel Mr. Neame to explain himself more clearly when he writes that the ancient church buildings of England were appropriated from the "Catholic centuries." The remark by itself is so shallow and silly an historical statement that it should have been omitted or expanded. What does Neame mean by "appropriate?" From whom were they appropriated? The fact is that the overwhelming majority of parish churches continued to operate without any break whatever, under the spiritual guidance of the same clergy.

I have commented at length, not to convince you or Mr. Neame or your readers of the truth of Anglican convictions, but because I believe that The Commonweal would wish to be fair and intellectually responsible in its comments on other Christian bodies, and I sincerely believe that Mr. Neame's article, in certain places, took on the character of a propaganda piece.

(Rev.) JOHN C. FOWLER.

AN APPEAL

A non-Catholic reader writes on behalf of the largest private boarding school for Indians in America, which is conducted by Jesuit Fathers and Franciscan Nuns for five hundred boys and girls, whom they feed, clothe, house and educate. The school is isolated and operates under truly poverty-stricken conditions. "I have just learned that they must replace their ancient heating-plant at a cost of $30,000." This must be done as winter on the Dakota plains is extremely severe. "I am urging everyone who can possibly do so to come to the immediate aid of [this] wonderful Catholic mission that is in the most desperate of circumstances." Readers who would like to contribute should address: Rev. E. Lawrence Edwards, S.J., Holy Rosary Mission, Pine Ridge, South Dakota.

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A STORY

A Wash of Gamboge

by CAROL HAWKES

NEW YORK sunsets are in frightfully bad taste. They flare up through the Jersey smoke over the Palisades, streaking the sky with red, orange, yellow, purple, even green. They make lurid silhouettes of smokestacks and steeples. They blaze back at themselves from the river.

Most New Yorkers, embarrassed by such ostentation, will pretend that the city has no sunsets. "Sunsets?" they'll say, as if the idea were a new one. "We don't see them here. Maybe from the top of the Empire State. . . ." But they know in their hearts what splendor would confront them if they stepped westward for a few blocks in the late afternoon.

As for myself, feeling guilty as a secret drinker, I sometimes stroll over to the Drive to enjoy the show. I confess that it exhilarates me. I've puzzled over the exhilaration, for it has nothing to do with love of nature or pantheism or any of the other esthetic or quasi-religious emotions usually associated with sunsets. It is rather a sense of personal triumph, as if I were responsible for all that glory. It is also vaguely familiar, and I've been searching my mind to discover just what the connection may be. Only today did I get an inkling of its source when some children carrying schoolbooks ran down the Drive as I stood looking out over the river. Then I remembered other children, myself among them, at school years ago in the fourth—no, the fifth grade. And Miss Corbett being introduced as a distinguished visitor who would teach us art. . . .

Art was a new subject for our class that year. We regarded it as a badge of maturity, since at our school it was offered only to pupils in the upper grades and the weekly lessons were given by a teacher from "outside." Within our memory this special teacher had been a gray-haired lady, Mrs. Murray, who brought flowers to class for her pupils to draw.

Now, however, it appeared that Miss Corbett was to teach us art. Looking at her, I decided that she would not be likely to bring flowers to class. She was thin and very tall—a head taller than Mrs. Murray and twice as tall as any of us. She wore a tawny wool skirt and cape, and on her head an enormous black velvet tam-o-shanter, which added several inches to her height. She spoke in a bass voice.

"We shall begin with finger painting," she announced, towering over us from the teacher's platform at the front of the room. "Our purpose will be to develop freedom of style."

Supplies were distributed: large sheets of slippery-surfaced paper and gobs of squishy finger paint in blue and green. I plunged my hands into the paint and smeared it over the paper. Its texture was that of wet mud. With a flick of the hand I could make curves and angles, moons, stars, and trees. Miss Corbett may have given further directions, but I did not hear. I returned to reality only when I discovered that my paint had become so dry as to be unmanageable.

I raised my hand. Miss Corbett, who was moving about the room, already collecting some finished pictures in a large black folder, made her way between the rows to my desk. As she leaned over me, the ample crown of her tam-o-shanter tilted darkly forward and threw a shadow over my work.

"Nonobjective?" she inquired with an odd note in her voice.

I explained about the drying.

She drew herself up beside me in the aisle. "Indecision is the curse of art," she said, loudly enough to be heard all over the room.

She opened her black folder, and deliberately lifting up the pictures which lay inside, put mine on the bottom of the pile. Then she pointed a warning finger at me as she moved on, a finger from which, I am sure, issued some kind of paralyzing ray. The lesson period was almost over by that time, but I cannot recall hearing the bell ring or seeing the class dismissed.

THE TROUBLE was that the next art lesson brought me no more success. Nor did the one after, nor the one after that. Something always went wrong. The paint was too wet or too dry; I'd tear the paper or drop it on the floor; I'd forget that my hands were covered with paint and rub them on my face or dress and then have to be sent to the washroom to clean up. Every week, with or without comment, Miss Corbett put my work on the bottom of the pile in her folder. I acquired a distaste for finger painting as profound as my lack of ability. I'd have welcomed any release.

Then one happy day Miss Corbett announced that we were about to turn to water color. My heart leaped. I had a water-color paintbox at home with which, since infancy, I had waged war on black-and-white book illustrations, so I regarded water colors as

Miss Hawkes now lives on Long Island. This is her first appearance in The Commonweal.

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old friends. My method was to wet my paintbrush, rub it vigorously on the cake of color with a boring, circular motion (the colors in my paintbox quickly developed whirlpool-shaped depressions), and then fill in the picture spaces solidly.

Under Miss Corbett's instruction I quickly discovered that this simple procedure must be abandoned. She revealed instead a method which struck me with peculiar force. On the very first day of our water-color experiments she demonstrated how, by flooding the paper with water, washing in blue at the top and rose at the bottom, then tipping the paper up to let the colors run together, one could produce a sea of glowing blending tones. I knew that somewhere I had seen such a glow of color before. . . . A sunset! That was it! The likeness would be perfect, I thought, with the addition of some extra color, especially gold, and at the bottom a horizon line to show where the sky ended and the earth began.

I practiced. I practiced throughout that class hour with only indifferent success. Miss Corbett collected my paper without comment; she was used to me now. But when I went home I got out my box of water colors and practiced some more. All through that week I experimented, adding new colors and a skyline at the bottom of the page. By the time of our art lesson the following week I was prepared, and during the class hour that day I painted a sunset to end all sunsets—a glow of red, orange, yellow, purple, and green. When I had finished, I raised my hand, and Miss Corbett, no doubt expecting the worst, slowly came to my desk.

She studied my sunset in silence for what seemed to me an interminably long time Then she returned it with neither praise nor blame. She only said, "You must give it a wash of gamboge."

"Gamboge!" I was startled. "What's that?"

For answer she pointed to a yellowish cake of color in the paintbox. Since then I have seen gamboge which is clear and light. The school gamboge, however, was muddy and dark. Even in cake form it looked so unattractive that I had ignored it. Now, sensing what would happen if I washed it over my picture, I was inclined not to follow Miss Corbett's advice, but she continued to stand behind me and her shadow was compelling. Alas! As I washed the gamboge over my work, the vivid colors blended, melted into each other, lost their powers of self-assertion. They were still visible but no longer gaudy. A splendor had departed from the earth.

"That will do nicely," Miss Corbett said and carried the picture up to her desk to dry. Later I saw her place it in the black classwork folder—on top.

I managed to survive the rest of the art classes that year, but somehow I was never again swept into heaven by an esthetic thrill. Toward the end of the term we had a Parents' Day exhibition of our work, and I was rather pleased to find my sunset tacked up among the water colors. That is, I was pleased in a detached sort of way. The picture was pretty, but I could not feel that it was mine. It was too calm, too restrained to express what I felt about sunsets. So I accorded it polite attention, along with the work of the other pupils. When the exhibition was over, I forgot to take it home.

IN FACT, I'd forgotten it completely until that sunset over the Palisades this afternoon brought it back to my mind. There were the blazing colors as I had painted them—red, orange, purple, yellow, green. There were the silhouettes of steeples and spires. But as I watched I was struck with the certainty of Miss Corbett's disapproval if she had been there to see, and my vision of all her kindred spirits looming up in the shadow of her tam-o-shanter, shaking their heads and averting their eyes, was positively frightening.

At that moment the setting sun shot long, fiery rays up through the clouds. This was too much! I could not bear the thought of the cosmos being put on the bottom of Miss Corbett's pile. "Give it a wash of gamboge, O Lord," I cried. "Give it a wash of gamboge!"

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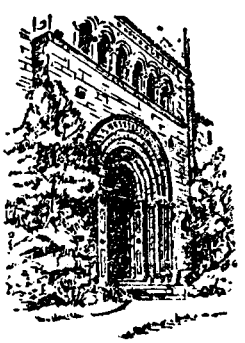

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A Great and Controversial Priest and Scientist

THE PHENOMENON OF MAN. By Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. Harper. $5.

By KARL STERN

FATHER Teilhard de Chardin, French Jesuit priest and scientist of international fame in the fields of geology, paleontology and anthropology, has written, apart from scientific publications in technical journals, several major works which could not be published during his lifetime. Ecclesiastical authorities apparently regarded these books as too controversial to be published while the author was alive. Father Teilhard's books have been published only since his death in 1955, but in the Vatican pavilion of the Brussels World Exhibition his portrait was displayed in a gallery of the great men of our time.

The publication of this book in English comes at the centenary of the first publication of *The Origin of Species*. This is one of those accidents of history which seem full of significance. For here, one feels, the concept of biological evolution, originally mechanistic and typically "nineteenth century" (later crudely elaborated into a "philosophy" by Thomas Huxley, Ernst Haeckel and others) has found its crowning and, at the same time, its antithesis. Father Teilhard possessed that extremely rare combination (one might be tempted to use the word "freak" if it did not have a negative connotation) of scientific and contemplative genius. Among his many outstanding scientific achievements are the co-discovery of *homo sinensis* in China and the scientific evaluation of the *Australopithecus* in South Africa. He was a lonely man among scientists; his religious convictions must have been alien to them. And he regretted that theologians lived in a territory so far removed from the exciting frontier of the twentieth century—the area of scientific discovery.

Julian Huxley pays him the highest tribute as a scientist; and Henri Marrou confesses that he owed "everything he tried to achieve, to think and to write" to a retreat he made at the age of twenty-three under Father Teilhard. During a famous expedition into North China and the Mongolian desert Father Teilhard wrote an essay "La Messe sur le Monde." He, who was a member of many scientific academies and whom many knew only as a researcher with a geological hammer in his hand, listened, during a rainy night in the streets of Paris, to a young man who had lost his faith, and, walking back and forth for three hours between St. Augustin and La Madeleine, brought him back to God.

Father Teilhard who thus combined in his person the sphere of the scientific and the spiritual attempted a formal synthesis. Cosmogenesis has aim and meaning—Man. And Man has his aim and meaning, a supra-personal cosmic consciousness (the "Omega Point"). The entire evolutionary process—from diffuse matter to crystallization and polymerisation; from this to the development of a *biosphere;* from this to the world of conscience (the *noosphere*) and the appearance of Man—all this is presented elaborately and with a wealth of scientific detail. Even the factual scientific material by itself, apart from the argument, makes for a rewarding reading.

Far from being blind and fortuitous, evolution can be understood properly only as a drama of unfolding, a phenomenon of entelechy. The starting point, the Alpha, contains already the Omega. The most obtuse materialist must admit that this process of evolution, even in its crude Darwinian conception, is anti-entropic: it goes against the second law of thermodynamics according to which all energy ought to "deteriorate" and lead to a kind of thermal death. In other words, the forms under which energy appears in the process of evolution are against all mathematical probability. This alone excludes the possibility of evolution as a chance occurrence and constitutes a scientific proof of creation. (Lecomte de Nouy has, quite independently, demonstrated mathematically that even the arrangements of atoms in one molecule of protein, within the space of time which scientists commonly allot to the cosmogenesis, cannot have come about by chance.) Before the *noosphere* proper develops, the psychic is anticipated, as it were; rudimentary forms of the psychic principle may be present in inorganic matter—a startling thought.

The Christian reader may be even more startled to find certain analogies between the "Omega Point" of Father Teilhard and the "Great Being" (a kind of supra-consciousness) of Auguste Comte. The principal difference is that the Cosmology and Anthropology of Father Teilhard are distinctly Christocentric. Although this is properly stated only in an epilogue, it is implicit throughout the book. The drama of evolution as presented here, is transcendental, but this transcendence is not expressed in common theological terminology. One feels throughout the book that it was written for scientists rather than theologians, and its aim seems to be to awaken a metaphysical sense in a skeptical scientist rather than convince a believing Christian of scientific truths.

Father Teilhard's work, like so many achievements of the human mind, has remained fragmentary. It is difficult to know whether this is due to the fact that there was not enough time left or whether the author's aim and method were such that he had to leave some basic questions unanswered. As the story reads now there is no proper place for Adam, the Original Man of revelation, and consequently, one must also ask oneself where the story of the Fall "comes in." (The entire treatment of the problem of Evil is tentative, and is characteristically dealt with only in a brief appendix.) Could it be that space-time as we know it, which provides

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the framework for the entire concept of evolution, is in itself an outcome of the Fall? Could it be that in a paradisical cosmos there existed a state which Goethe claims for Heaven—namely, that metaphor and concrete reality are mysteriously one? These hypotheses are by no means mutually exclusive. At any rate, Father Teilhard leaves the problem alone. It is as though all he wanted to do was to add a *supplément d'âme* to the scientific facts, and leave it at that.

Father Teihard does not use the language of "official" (*horrible dictu*) Catholic philosophy. The name of St. Thomas does not once occur, and Aristotle is mentioned a few times in an accidental context. Nevertheless, one feels, between the lines so-to-speak, a sound philosophical background. This is the more agreeable since most of the common literature on "science and religion" consists of pious or positivistic (dependent on the author's home grounds) redundancies. Even with good authors (for example, Eddington or Jeans) one cannot get rid of the feeling of philosophical dilettantism, albeit at its best.

Not so with Father Teilhard. The reader who wants his argument cut and dried will, of course, be bewildered. There seems to be a platonist element implied throughout the book. The way in which Father Teilhard uses the term "seeing" is strongly reminiscent of Goethe and the German philosophy of Nature of the early nineteenth century. The influence of Bergson (which was quite decisive on Father Teilhard during his youth) can also be strongly felt. The fact that a philosophical method cannot be pigeon-hol'ed does not deny the validity of its argument. The strongest impression is that of a great scientist with the deep metaphysical disquietude of a St. Augustine or a Pascal. And there is no doubt that later, when people will look back at our time as the dark ages of positivism, Father Teilhard's search will stand out like a flashing beam. It is only to be hoped that all his writings (some more theologically oriented than this one) will soon appear in English.

The Enchantment of Veracity

HAPPY FAMILIES ARE ALL ALIKE. By Peter Taylor. McDowell, Obolensky. $3.95.

By MAX COSMAN

THIS VOLUME of ten short stories, which owes its title to the first sentence of Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina,* should heighten the repute Mr. Taylor has achieved with such former works as *A Long Fourth, A Woman of Means,* and *The Widows of Thornton.* There is the same engrossment in the character of the substantial families of the upper South and the same level presentation, well-bred without being prissy, elegiacal without being mawkish, ironic without being unsympathetic. And potent as ever, there is the same concern with truthful social analysis whose distinguishing characteristic Robert Penn Warren has caught so well in the phrase, "the enchantment of veracity."

"The Other Times" is the first of Mr. Taylor's cases on record. An account of some young scions out for a good time, it resolves itself into an exposé of their inadequacy. Uncle Louis, whom they despise for good enough snobbish reasons, turns out to be the true gentleman after all. (Mr. Taylor's god of the machine is quite apt to be an uncle or an aunt.) It is Letitia's admiration that causes the narrator in the story, and the representative of his cribbed generation, to say, "But the point is I *didn't* know how to make a girl like her look at me that way. And the question is why *didn't* I know how?"

The answer, obviously, is that genuine manhood and self-sacrifice have not been emphasized in his upbringing as they have been in that of his elders. In "Guests," Mr. Taylor broadens the attack. With no great effort he transforms a tale of hospitality to what seems undeserving relatives into a study of non-communication. The fault, we shortly see, is not in poor Cousin Johnny's ineptitude or in Cousin Annie's intransigence as in the break between the old world which they are a part of and the new one which urbanized Edmund and Henrietta stand for. It is but poetic justice that Johnny's death should come as a shock to Edmund and move him to mourn for "the old ways, the old life, where people had real grandfathers and real children, and where love was something that could endure the light of day."

A further documentation of contemporary loss appears in "Heads of Houses." Dwight and Kitty vacationing with Papa and Mama Harper are so unhappy they can barely finish their stay. And yet it is not as if either of the parties involved is contemptible or unworthy. It is rather as if some former reality, say that of kinsmanship, has reduced younger and older people to making believe to each other.

In full spate now, Mr. Taylor takes a long look at one of the most traditional of Southern mores—*noblesse oblige*. It is shown in decay in "A Friend and Protector." To all intents Uncle Andrew and Aunt Margaret behave like loyal masters to their factotum Jesse, but they are nothing of the kind. As a matter of fact, all their actions in his behalf, and here we come to a most startling accusation, are no more than a visiting of self-destructive wishes on the Negro they profess to help.

Though Mr. Taylor does not drive at his symbolism like Melville, let us say, it is hard not to sense in this narrative a modern version of the Biblical scapegoat heaped with the sins of masters and driven into the wilderness. (Read insane asylum for wilderness, for that is where Jesse is incarcerated after a breakdown.) One is even tempted to take the story as a parable on the historic relationship between whites and blacks. But this would draw us into a critical jungle, and, observing the latest warnings of Karl Shapiro, we will desist.

This much, however, should be said: Mr. Taylor is nothing if not cognizant of the ultimate serious-

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ness of things. His awareness is as patent in callow reminiscences like "1939" and *"Je Suis Perdu"* as it is in mature expositions like "Venus, Cupid, Folly and Time," "The Little Cousins," and "Promise of Rain."

The last-named, indeed, has a pertinence of perception second to none. Mr. Perkins shown watching son Hugh grow up with the years suddenly realizes that he can see the world through the young man's eyes.

Analyzing this new discovery he crystallizes out the reason why one should rejoice. "Because," and this is his conclusion, "it is only then that the world, as you have seen it through your own eyes, will begin to tell you things about yourself."

With Mr. Perkins as exemplar it is no task at this moment to summarize our own discovery as to Mr. Taylor's literary importance. Briefly it is this: in one observation after another he makes us privy to a world that tells us things about ourselves.

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ART

Contemporary American

GOING TO see the Whitney Museum's Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting (it does not include sculpture and drawing this year) is somewhat like going to a very large cocktail party, and provides some analogous joys and sorrows. One has the stimulation of having seen a great number of people but the disconcerting feeling of not having *really* talked to any of them. One comes away both exhilarated and exhausted from the multiplicity of impressions. Then one wonders if large cocktail parties aren't essentially a mistake, even if they very well may be the most practical way to entertain a crowd.

Certain impressions eventually prove strong enough to detach themselves from the confusion and, after the event, float up to the surface of memory. In general it can be said that at the Whitney this year abstract art still seems to dominate the scene and to display the greatest vitality and conviction —with the notable exception of Wyeth, whose poetic love of reality and technical skill make *Albert's Son* a tight little island of distinction. Among the abstract artists the element which is still handled with most authority, and which carries the burden of communication almost single-handedly, is color. In Adja Yunkers' *Bewitcher's Sabbath I* the colors bloom sensuously in a simple bouquet-like composition; In Thomas Sills' *After Glow* a mere *expansion* of veined reds eloquently expresses an emotional state; in in Thomas Goodnough's *Summer II* color is divided and articulated in a lively kaleidoscopic form.

Color used for shock value, color treated impressionistically, color as the motif for composition, color for its own sweet sake—every variety of emphasis can be found in overriding abundance in this show of contemporary American painting. In William Baziotes' *The Sea* the opalescent color is the basis, subtle and evocative, for the abstract shapes that float in a dreamlike composition; this is one of the best, if not the best painting in the exhibit, and I believe it is so because the poetic impulse of the artist informs all the elements of the painting.

Geometric abstraction plays a minor role in this exhibit and even, to my mind, has often a stubborn look of pedantry about it except for Ellsworth Kelly's *East River,* which, clean, sharp, bright, evokes, with its cut-out design of blue and white, the shapes of barges obliquely approaching each other over the water.

The only "imagist" work that returns to mind with absolute conviction is David Park's *Daphne,* a bold painting in which the color is used both expressively and to emphasize the heavy modeling of the form.

A friend from Arkansas once said that going in to see the Whitney Annual through the back passage from the Museum of Modern Art was like going from a Capital into the provinces. Logically unfair as such an appreciation is, it has its humorous persuasiveness, and on the occasion of the present Annual I decided to try it out in reverse, moving on from the Annual Exhibit to the first floor of the Museum of Modern Art to see *their* exhibit, by happy coincidence that of "Recent Acquisitions." These acquisitions cover a period from the 1890's to the present day (instead of the Whitney's contemporaries), include artists from twelve countries (instead of only Americans) and comprise fifty-two paintings and sculptures (instead of one hundred forty-five paintings); they are, however, acquisitions made by the Modern

REVIEWERS

Karl Stern is the well-known author of *Pillar of Fire, The Third Revolution* and a forthcoming book, *Through Dooms of Love.*

Max Cosman, a regular contributor, writes for various American critical and scholarly journals.

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Museum over the past year or so and therefore might be seen as today's choice of "perennials" in contrast to today's choice of native representatives for the Whitney's "Annual." I was pleased and astonished to see that, despite the several incomparable "perennials" included in the Modern Art's display, the Annual managed to maintain a hardy and engaging liveliness against such severe competition.

Let it at once be said that among the Museum of Modern Art's recent acquisitions is the breathtaking *Water Lilies,* a huge triptych by Claude Monet, in which the almost-abstract impressionism of the late style of the artist is revealed in all its enchantment. However, leaving out this masterpiece and all of the sculpture, the Whitney Annual even while hewing to the discursive character of its intention, stands up respectably to the considered choice of its sister museum. Ben Shahn's *Man* at the Modern Art is of course a more vivid, coherent work than the rather affected Shahn *Mural Study* in the Annual; Luis Martinez Pedro's *Composition 13* is geometric abstraction pierced by poetic meaning in a way that is only handsomely approached by Kelly's *East River;* but Goodnough's *Laocoon* is only a slightly better example of that artist's composition in kaleidoscope color than the aforementioned *Summer II* and while there is nothing quite as good at the Whitney as Sugai's *Kubuki,* Adolph Gottleib's *Positive* has a substantial amount of the same sure, decisive pattern. Furthermore, there are several pictures chosen supposedly in part for their historical significance (among which I would perhaps rather wildly include Buccioni's *The Laugh*) which seem to have little more intrinsic merit than those "annuals" chosen in the spirit of representativeness.

All in all, it seems that contemporary American painting, even if a large "representative" slice of it may be rather fatiguing, is lively and impressive, and includes many artists worth knowing permanently. Both the Whitney Museum's "Annual" and the Museum of Modern Art's "New Acquisitions" will be on view until January 31, 1960.

BETTY KAUFMAN.

An exhibit of fine photographs by Alexander Liberman entitled "The Artist in His Studio," which includes fairly shallow studies of Picasso, Braque, Matisse, Rouault etc., will be at the Museum of Modern Art until January 10, and then will tour the U.S. and Canada.

Schedule for "The Artist In His Studio" tour:

Feb. 18—April 4:
National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa

June 1—26:
J. B. Speed Museum of Art, Louisville, Ky.

July 8—31:
Art Institute of Chicago

In the current issue, ROBERT LEWIS TAYLOR talks about the recent cranberry crisis, and makes some very sour projections. GERHART NIEMEYER has a look at the Impending Thaw. And Professor WILLIAM PETERSON announces a new Law, named after himself.

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New 3¾% interest on U.S. Savings Bonds

The Treasury explains why the new ones you buy and the ones you own now are better than ever

Q: How does the new 3¾% interest rate benefit me?

A: With Series E Bonds, the rate turns $18.75 into $25.00 fourteen months faster than the old rate. Your savings increase faster, because your Bonds mature in just 7 years, 9 months.

With Series H Bonds, the 10-year maturity period stays the same but more interest is paid you each six months. With both E and H Bonds the new rate works out to 2½% for the first year and a half; then a guaranteed 4% each year to maturity.

Q: When did the new rate become effective?

A: June 1, 1959.

Q: Does the new rate change the Bonds I bought before June 1, 1959?

A: All older E and H Bonds pay more now—an extra ½% from now on, when held to maturity. The increase takes effect in the first full interest period after June 1.

Q: Will the Bonds I own automatically earn their new rate?

A: Yes. You don't need to do a thing—just hold on to your Bonds.

Q: When my E Bonds mature, will they keep on earning interest?

A: Yes. An automatic 10-year extension privilege went into effect along with the new interest rate. This means your E Bonds will automatically keep earning interest after maturity.

Q: With the new interest rate, should I cash in my old Bonds and buy new ones?

A: No. The automatic ½% increase makes it unnecessary—and in almost every case it is to your advantage to retain your present Bonds.

Q: How safe are U.S. Savings Bonds?

A: Savings Bonds are an absolutely riskless way to save. The United States Government guarantees the cash value of your Bonds will not drop, that it can only grow.

Q: What if my Bonds should be lost, stolen or destroyed?

A: You can't lose. Every Bond purchased is recorded by the Treasury. If anything happens to your Bonds they are replaced—free.

Q: How do I help strengthen America's peace power when I buy U.S. Savings Bonds?

A: Peace costs money—money for military strength and for science. And money saved by individuals helps keep our economy sound.

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